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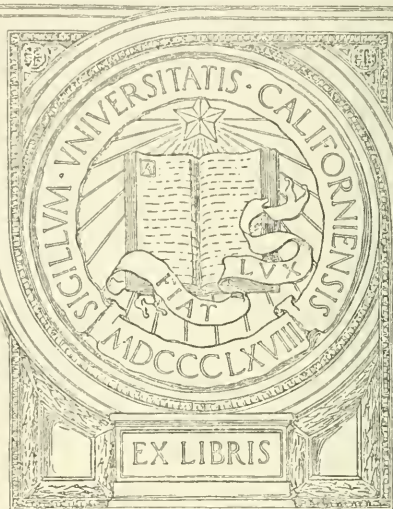


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AN ADDRESS,

DELIVERED JULY 15, 1835,

BEFORE THE

EUCLEIAN AND PHILOMATHEAN SOCIETIES

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF THE CITY OF NEW-YORK.

BY

JOHN BRECKINRIDGE, D. D.

NEW-YORK:

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CORRESPONDENCE.

NEW-YORK UNIVERSITY, July 17, 1835.

REV. JOHN BRECKINRIDGE.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

At a meeting of the ECCLESIAN SOCIETY of the University of the City of New-York, held Thursday, July 16, 1835, it was unanimously

"RESOLVED, That a committee of five be appointed, to present the thanks of this society to the Rev. John Breckinridge, for the very able and eloquent Address delivered before them, on the evening of the 15th instant, and to request a copy thereof for publication."

In discharging this duty, permit us to express the hope we indulge, that we shall not be disappointed in receiving the Address; for if we mistake not our own feelings, we are really desirous of having continually before us, and of presenting to others, an answer to the query, "What is our duty as American Young Men, in the present important crisis of our nation's history?"

With the highest respect and esteem,

Believe us yours sincerely,

JOHN E. CALDWELL DOREMUS,	}	COMMITTEE.
R. R. KELLOGG,		
ALFRED VAIL,		
JAMES S. M'CAULEY,		
ALFRED HOLMES,*		

TO MESSRS. JOHN E. CALDWELL DOREMUS,
R. R. KELLOGG,
ALFRED VAIL,
JAMES S. M'CAULEY.

YOUNG GENTLEMEN,

In reply to your esteemed communication of July 17th, it is my duty to say, that it was with much hesitation I yielded to your very kind invitation, to deliver the first Annual Address, before the "Eucleian and Philomathean Societies," on the evening of July 15th, feeling deeply conscious of my unfitness to do justice to that interesting service. Yet having consented to attempt it, what was uttered on that occasion became your property, and ought to be at your disposal. I do not feel at liberty, therefore, to decline a compliance with your request for its publication. It is due, however, to you, and to myself also, to say, that my long delay in meeting your wishes, has been owing not only to

* Since deceased.

the shortness of the original notice, (which put it out of my power to commit the Address to writing before its delivery,) but to the very active nature of my present engagements, which afford little repose or leisure for such duties. The manuscript sent herewith, will be found to embrace the substance of what was spoken, excepting two allusions; one to O'Connell, who is too *low* to notice; the other, to our late illustrious Chief Justice, who was *above* all praise, but who has since been so ably and faithfully eulogized, that my hasty allusion seems now to be unnecessary.

The principles asserted in this Address, however imperfectly uttered, will, I cannot doubt, commend themselves to the hearts and understandings of the *American Youth*, to whom the Address, through your valuable Society, is respectfully dedicated, by their friend and fellow-citizen,

JOHN BRECKINRIDGE.

PHILADELPHIA EDUCATION ROOMS, }
December 24, 1835. }

A D D R E S S , & c .

THAT was a moment of sublime and awful interest, and replete with great events, which made known the New World to Christopher Columbus. The consummation of this most memorable enterprise in the history of the world, is thus described by our own Irving, the biographer of the great Captain :

“ When Columbus was wrapped from observation by the shades of night, he maintained an intense and unremitted watch, ranging his eye along the dusky horizon, in search of the most vague indications of land. At two in the morning, a gun from the Pinta (the vessel of Columbus) gave the joyous signal for land ; whereupon they took in sail, and laid to, waiting impatiently for the dawn. The thoughts and feelings of Columbus in this little space of time, must have been most tumultuous and intense. The great mystery of the ocean was revealed ; his theory, which had been the scoff of sages, was triumphantly established ; he had secured himself a glory, which must be as durable as the world itself. It is difficult for the imagination to conceive the feelings of such a man, at the moment of so *sublime a discovery*.”

Never was a vessel so richly freighted with the destiny of nations, as that which bore the invincible spirit of Columbus to our Hemisphere. If events are to be estimated by their results, nothing in the history of human enterprise can exceed this discovery in real greatness, or in illimitable good to man. It was the fault of the age, rather than of his own enlarged spirit, that Columbus took possession of the New World in the name of Ferdinand and Isabella : and it

was the consummation of the art of sinking, when the Roman Pontiff, by a pompous bull, gravely bestowed our Continent on the Sovereigns of Castile. Columbus should have possessed it, in the name of the Son of God, and of the human race. It was not made for "*Cæsar*," nor "*the Pope*" of *Rome*, but for truth, for liberty, and man; and, glowing as were the visions of the illustrious discoverer, he saw not those sublime results which were soon to become the chief glory of the New World.

While the whole Continent has become his imperishable monument, it was evidently designed by the only Sovereign whom we acknowledge, to be one vast theatre for the display of the Divine glory, and the advancement of human society in all that is good and great.

The *preparatory events*, which, by an overruling Providence were made to precede or to attend the discovery of America, were of the most extraordinary character, and in their progressive development, indicate the relation which they bear to that great occurrence. As the fact of the discovery doubled the domain of civilized man, so the events to which we allude, seem to have been brought on by the Ruler of the world, to dispose and enable the youthful nations on which he designed to bestow it, to make the right appropriation of so vast an inheritance. It was as if God had made a new grant to man for new and nobler efforts in the advancement of truth, liberty, and the public good. The discovery of the magnet, the revival of letters, the invention of printing, and, to name no more, the ever-memorable Reformation, (that re-visitation of the earth with light and glory from on high,) seem designed, by Heaven, to prepare the way for unfolding the resources, and shaping the destiny of America.

Especially did the last named event, or rather galaxy of events, come forth as a morning star from the hand of God, to lead the Old World, as it awoke from the long, dark night which had for ages overhung it, to the better hopes, and

sacred freedom of the New. The *Pope* ceded America to Ferdinand of Spain : God gave it to *liberty*. *America was the dowry of the Reformation.*

European monarchists, who call our resistance to tyrants rebellion, and our freedom, radicalism, affect to despise our praise of American principles, as national vanity. We claim not to be infallible, either in Church or in State. We leave to the Political and Religious Despots of the Old World, to garnish the sepulchres of their perishing institutions with presumptuous titles of divine right, and empty names of inerrability. But we may humbly bless the God of nations, that, by the Reformation of Luther, and its immediate results, he prepared a people in the old world, and then, by his providence, gathered them out, and sent them forth to colonize America. It is not speaking too strongly, when we say, that the light of our national liberty dawned in the cell of Luther. "*It was upon him,*" says Schlegel, though himself a monarchist, "*It was upon him and his soul that the fate of Europe depended. He was* THE MAN *of his age and his nation.*"

Among the most memorable facts in the history of liberty, is this : that the Reformation occurred among the hardy and indomitable Saxons ; and that it passed, burning in their bosoms, through Geneva, and Britain, and Holland, to North America ; so that the genius of the Reformation was the germ of our national freedom. Who can estimate, without mingled emotions of horror and gratitude, the consequences which might have resulted from the settlement of our country by Spain, or Portugal, or even France herself ? Yet Spain first took possession of *our* soil ; and she long held a large domain, and presented a threatening front on our borders. Who can doubt, that, because Spain and Portugal discharged the masses of their population on the southern limb of our Hemisphere, and impressed on it the despotism of their civil and religious institutions, therefore,

there is yet no peace, no happiness, no freedom, for that vast Continent? Why is it that their deliverance still lingers? That though the political tyrants have been chased out of these lands, the people have yet no freedom? It is because Spain and Portugal, two centuries ago, breathed into that noble Continent, "where man alone is vile," the pestilence of civil and religious despotism; because they closed on her the page of knowledge, and forbade to her the Bible, which reveals and works out the liberties of man.

And what if France, who so long skirted our frontier with her military fortresses, had possessed and peopled this land? The Huguenots of France, like the Puritans of England, were her only real freemen, and the only race of all her sons fitted to found Republics in the New World. But dishonored France denied them alike exile abroad, or existence, without infamy, at home. She commanded them to depart, yet pursued their flight. She bade them stay, and yet did not permit them to live and be free. But in every land where the remnant of this injured, noble people, have found rest, they stand forth the wards of a guardian Providence, and a crown of glory to every people.

It was not then to Spain, or Portugal, or France, that Heaven allotted the sublime enterprise of laying on these shores the foundations of the AMERICAN SYSTEM. It was to Anglo-Saxons, in whom breathed the spirit of Luther, and Calvin, and the Puritans, that we owe the establishment in America of religious and civil liberty; and the hand was Divine, which prepared the events, the men, and the asylum, and in due time, blended them in that great result in which we now rejoice.

It is not our purpose to dwell on the eventful history of our country. We must leave your youthful hearts to trace with ever fresh delight and gratitude to God, the progress of the memorable events which led to the present glorious consummation.

WE CAN ONLY EXHIBIT, IN A VERY IMPERFECT AND CURSORY WAY, SOME OF THE FEATURES WHICH PECULIARLY CHARACTERIZE OUR COUNTRY, AND THEN POINT OUT THE DUTY OF AMERICAN YOUTH, RESULTING FROM SUCH A VIEW, ESPECIALLY AT THE PRESENT CRISIS.

I. Our country is eminently characterized as the depository of liberty.

We have already seen how the way was prepared, and how the events were brought forth in such an order as to make our country the refuge of all men who were sighing for freedom under the ancient dynasties of Europe. The pressure of tyrannic power, both in the civil and religious world, seemed to produce on such minds a general desire for change; and emigration to America offered that hope, which was looked for in vain from domestic revolution. Hence, the immediate effect was, an Exodus to the newly discovered Continent of the selectest spirits of the age. The most enterprising, intrepid, and godly men, the votaries of freedom, civil and religious, at home, were the men who colonized America. They were attracted to a country far from the oppressor, where God and nature offered freedom and rest.

Deus abscedit
Prudens oceano dissociabili
Terras.

And they were chased out of Europe: hurried away as men who were disturbing the repose of arbitrary power, religious despotism, and the antiquated and rotten institutions of the dark ages.

Such were the Puritans, whose praises historic truth has extorted, as a reluctant tribute, from the pen even of David Hume, who has said, "*by them alone the precious spark of liberty has been kindled, and was preserved; and to them the English owe the whole freedom of their constitution.*" Such were the followers of the illustrious Penn; such the

few, but noble descendants of the Huguenots, who took refuge in our country ; such were the Protestants of Holland, Great Britain, and Ireland ; such the *Elite* of the Anglo-Saxon yeomanry and gentry ; and, in a word, such that *Eclectic* nation, gathered out of Protestant Europe to this great asylum of persecuted man, as the *Avant Courriers* of American liberty, and the illustrious founders of the American States.

Here, where all things were formed on a scale of unsubdued liberty and greatness ; widely separated from the corruptions and oppression of the mother-countries, the weary, but undaunted Pilgrims found room to expatiate on their long-plundered hopes, and to enjoy, in its true enlargement, the sublime right of freedom. Here they might revert to the first principles of the rights of man, and of the oracles of God : here recall the primeval days of simple, apostolic freedom, in the Church ; and here, with no tyrant to tread it down, plant in the soil of our country, on the right hand and on the left of the altar of God, the tree of liberty : here, in a word, remodel the institutions of the Church and of the State, on the basis of truth and freedom, deeply laid in the word of God, after that pattern which makes all men brethren and equals, and God the only monarch of the race. Thus liberty, long a wandering stranger, perched in hope on the standard of Columbus, and fixed her last abode rejoicing, on the green fields and the everlasting hills of our country.

It is true that our ancestors understood but imperfectly, the extent and fullness of that liberty for which they became voluntary exiles in a distant and barbarous land. It required the experience of an age, to teach them religious *toleration* ; and of another age, to instruct them that *not* toleration, but *universal equality*, and *entire protection* of the rights of conscience, was true religious liberty ; that the Church and the State could only prosper by putting eternal barriers between their respective administrations ; that every approach to union was an approach to mutual deformity and ruin ;

that the State corrupts and secularizes the Church, and the Church enslaves and absorbs the State. Thus the Puritans of New-England persecuted each other. The gentry of Virginia were long agitated by factions and civil feuds, in establishing the first principles of their freedom; and the Catholic Colony of Maryland restricted their religious toleration to a particular creed;* thus taking away much of the praise of that solitary and boasted example of *Catholic toleration*.

The efforts, also, of the colonies, toward the enlargement and perfection of their free constitutions, were continually checked by the dominion and jealousy of the Parent States, which were not too far away to fear and repress the rising spirit of freedom in America. Yet, in the final issue, civil and religious liberty has been settled on its true and eternal principles. The declaration of American independence, not to say the American constitutions, contains more truth on the rights of man, than all the legislation and pandects of ancient and modern times; excepting always, those infallible pages whence our fathers drew their knowledge and love of liberty, where the true principles of civil and religious freedom are taught as a revelation from God, and published to the earth as the indefeasible birth-right of man.

If this view be just, then our institutions differ from the best examples of the states of Europe, not only in the *consummate measure*, but in the *essential nature* of our freedom. Our rights are defined, not conferred, by our free constitutions. They depend, not on the will of a majority, but rest aback of all majorities, and of all constitutions, reposing, inalienably, in those high munitions which God has founded in the nature of man. *Union* gives power to sustain us in the *exercise* of these rights; but the *rights themselves* are from God. *Toleration* is the highest attainment of religious liberty in Europe; but toleration supposes forbearance, concession, favor, inequality of right. Reli-

* *Trinitarians* alone were tolerated.

gious liberty in America rises to universal equality in the rights of conscience. It throws its broad *Ægis* over all: it *protects* all. This may, with more fitness than all the adjustments of our political economy, and all the schemes of the national tariff, be called the American System. It is a return, in *Religion*, to the first principles of the Christian commonwealth, as revealed in the Gospel of Christ, and established by his Apostles; and in the *Civil State*, it is the practical operation of the great, self-evident truths, "That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."

Whether in the inscrutable providence of God, we are destined to follow the fate of the nations which have gone before us, it is not for our too partial and limited judgment to decide. But the principles on which we build our institutions are *eternal*; and the people who shall sustain them in their purity and power *cannot* be enslaved. They take away the tools of tyrants—they undermine their thrones—they cannot fail. Such is the liberty of which God has made us the honored and responsible conservators. It is a solemn trust: may it be an imperishable deposit!

We feel justified to denominate our country the *depository* of liberty, because full and true liberty is enjoyed by no other people; because it was in pursuit of liberty that our fathers performed that illustrious pilgrimage which brought them to America; because, in the name, and for the sake of liberty, the war of independence was waged, and the

national Union formed ; and because the perfect freedom of our institutions constitutes the distinguishing characteristic, and peculiar glory of the United States. There was a most noble expression of this *national idea*, given before the face of all nations, by our late Chief Magistrate, in the name of the Continent, and as the representative of liberty, when he gave notice to Europe, that the American people would not permit a war of conquest to be carried on against any state of this Hemisphere, by any power of Europe. It was a just and a sublime republication of the great principles of the American System. The American people responded as one man to the manifesto of their Chief Magistrate, made in the name of the human race ; and it was a most appropriate seal to the acknowledgment of the independence of the sister America, by our national legislature.

Alas ! that the unhappy States of Southern America, having expelled the civil despots, should now become the victims of intestine war, and the willing slaves of a corrupt and mercenary priesthood !

That it is not the indulgence of national vanity to call our country the *depository of liberty*, will appear by a reference to facts, illustrating the light in which we are regarded by foreign princes, who are always, *ex officio*, our *foes* ; and by the people of other lands, who are as uniformly our *friends*. We have a memorable example of the former in the history of the unfortunate Poles, who were forcibly sent to the United States by the Emperor of Austria.

These unhappy exiles were patriots in arms, nobly contending for their liberties, when they were overwhelmed by superior force. Their bleeding country had but recently been dismembered limb from limb, and distributed among the vultures of war. Now the smouldering spark of liberty must be extinguished for ever, lest, rekindling, it should arise, to rob these spoilers of their prey, and pursue them with destruction to their native eyry. Driven from their last retreat, the remnant of the Polish patriots found no

asylum even in an Empire professing itself neutral, but were arrested by order of the government, and, after the most barbarous treatment, were offered the bitter alternative of perpetual slavery or perpetual exile. Such men could not long hesitate in making the election, to be free, though in a distant land. It is a lasting tribute to our country, that *it* was selected by a prince famed for his enmity to free institutions, as their *appropriate home*. It was an unwilling compliment, wrung from oppression by the extraordinary crisis. It was so understood by the nations of Europe: it was so understood by the American people. The unfortunate patriots were conveyed to our country in an Austrian vessel of war! We received them as the guests of the nation. The characteristic hospitality of your noble city gave them with one hand, food and raiment, with the other the *Bible*. But they were the property, the *orphans* of the nation: she, therefore, endowed them with a portion of the national domain—feeling that the national position, the national honor, the national sentiment, called for some appropriate public act, which should not merely make provision for them at the public charge, *but should tell to the whole world, by some enduring monument, how the American people felt towards the countrymen of Kosciusko, who had been remitted to them, in the sight of all nations, by a faithless tyrant in the name of liberty.*

But why was America selected by the Emperor of Austria? Was it a casual choice? Why conduct them through the length of his Empire, under military escort, and then send them to our shores, in a vessel of state? Mercy would not force them into exile, nor cast them, in extreme necessity, on a foreign shore! No; it was not casual or merciful. If clothed in words, its language would be this: **Your restless and unquenchable love of liberty will disturb the deep repose of our subject empires; it will endanger our thrones; yet it will stain our escutcheons to immerse in Austrian and Russian dungeons, the last patriots of**

Poland. No, you shall be free ! But it shall be far away ; in a land where you will find congenial liberty ; where, at a returnless distance from Poland, and from tyrants, you may, without ruin to us, or contagion to the people, enjoy the freedom you desire. And we accept the honorable boon—we welcome the persecuted Pole, and the friend of freedom from every land, in the name of the depository of liberty.

We turn from the *oppressor* to the *people*, for another example from the many which history affords, in confirmation of our principle. It is taken from a scene in Mexico. It is a splendid event in the national history, and now glows upon the canvas, represented in its simple grandeur by an American artist. We allude to *the unfurling* of the American flag by our Minister at Mexico, in a moment of extremest peril ; which was sublimely conceived and performed, and which promptly reduced an infuriated mob to peace, while it called up in their minds the sentiments of American liberty and glory. “At the period,” says the Charleston circular, “of the revolution of the *Acordada*, which compelled the Congress of Mexico to reverse the election of Pedraza, and place Guerrero in the presidential chair—the city was taken by assault, and the army of Guerrero attacked and plundered the houses of the European Spaniards, who are peculiarly odious to the native Mexicans. Many of these persons had taken refuge in the house of the American Ambassador ; and it was pointed out to the exasperated soldiery as the asylum of their enemies. They rushed to attack it, and in a few minutes would have massacred all within its walls. At this moment, when hundreds of muskets were levelled at the windows, Mr. Poinsett, with his Secretary of Legation, Mr. John Mason, jr., threw himself into an open balcony which overlooked the crowd, and unfurling the STAR-SPANGLED BANNER, demanded that all persons in his house should be protected while the flag of his country waved over them. The scene changed as by

enchantment; and the very men who were about to make the attack, CHEERED THE STANDARD OF OUR UNION, and placed sentinels to guard it from outrage. The history of the world presents no parallel to such a scene; and its moral beauty and grandeur should be equally preserved on the page of the historian, and the canvas of the painter."

Now it was not chiefly the moral sublime of the action, which arrested and awed the infuriated mob, though that is scarcely surpassed in the history of the world,—it was not the fear of distant retribution (mobs do not foresee or fear the distant future)—it was the symbol of liberty; it was the standard of a *free* people, which attracted, melted, subdued the multitude, and amidst a sea of tumultuous passions, made so great a calm. It was the *star* of glorious hope, beaming from the banner of our country.

Quorum simul alba nautis
 Stella refulsit,
 Defluit saxis agitatus humor;
 Concidunt venti fugiuntque nubes;
 Et minax, (quod sic voluere,) ponto
 Unda recumbit.

We cannot forbear the narration of an effect produced by the same great sentiment of liberty, on a domestic mob. It is said that in your own city—which, unhappily, has not been exempt from these disgraceful scenes of popular commotion—while the relentless multitude, to use their own expressive language, was once *gutting* the house of an offensive citizen, they alighted on the *face of Washington*. In a moment there was a solemn pause, and a deep, diffusive silence through the thick mass. A voice then uttered these words: "*Take care of that!*" "*What is it?*" was the inquiry in every direction. "*Washington! Washington!*" was the reply. "*Washington!*" was now re-echoed with deafening shouts from the surrounding crowd, with a thousand voices, repeating "*Take care of Washington!*" The image of Washington, with as sacred an awe as such a mul-

titude could feel, was passed from hand to hand, above the heads of the whole crowd, and carefully laid away in a place of safety, by the last man who received it in the skirt of the mob. After a momentary pause, the work of havoc and fury was resumed. The name of Washington, the image of our country, and the love of liberty, live indivisibly in the memory of every American heart, and are but different associations of that high commanding sentiment which fluctuates through the millions of our people, as the active power of the national soul.

How potent must be that influence which can, by so simple an incident, for even a season, arrest the desolation, and subdue the tempestuous wrath of so great and excited a mass! How sad it is, that wisdom and patriotism do not teach our citizens to shun the *occasions* of such popular excitement; and that even liberty and light cannot prevent their occurrence. How true, that He alone can "*still the tumults of the people, who ruleth the raging of the sea; and by his strength setteth fast the mountains, being girded with power.*" Yet the above fact may serve to illustrate the enthusiastic devotion, even of the most degraded portion of our population, to those names and ideas which are associated in the public mind with national liberty. And if such be the feeling even of the mob, what must be the more elevated and enlightened public sentiment of the American people, where the power of religion, conspiring with the principles of freedom, identify our institutions with the rights of conscience, and the glory of God, as well as with the national honor and the public good!

II. *But it is time to examine, in the next place, the appropriate influence of our country, especially in view of this sacred deposit—Liberty.*

The memorable Villers said of our country thirty years ago, in the infancy of the Republic, "This State, still weak, at a distance from Europe, has not, hitherto, had much di-

rect influence on the political system. But who can calculate that which it may one day acquire on the colonial and commercial system so important to Europe? *Who can foretell all that may result in the two worlds, from the seductive example of the independence conquered by the Americans? What new position would the world assume if this example was followed? and without doubt it will be in the end."*

The prediction of this great man, at the opening of the nineteenth century, must become *history* before its close. It has so far become history already, that sober truth bears out the elegant and impartial Bancroft in the following noble illustrations of the same subject. "Who will venture to measure the consequences of actions by the humility or remoteness of their origin? The mysterious influence of that power which enchains the destinies of states, overruling the decisions of sovereigns, and the forethought of statesmen, often deduces the greatest events from the least commanding causes. A Genoese adventurer discovering America, changed the commerce of the world: an obscure German, inventing the printing press, rendered possible the universal diffusion of increased intelligence. An Augustine monk, denouncing indulgences, introduced a schism in religion, and changed the foundations of European politics. A young French refugee, skilled alike in theology and civil war, in the duties of magistrates, and the dialectics of religious controversy, entering the Republic of Geneva, conforming its ecclesiastical discipline to the principles of Republican simplicity, established a party, of which Englishmen became members, and New-England the asylum. The enfranchisement of the mind from religious despotism, led directly into inquiries into the nature of civil government; and the doctrines of popular liberty, which sheltered their infancy in the wildernesses of the newly discovered Continent, within the short space of two centuries, have infused themselves into the life blood of every rising State, from Labrador to

Chili; established outposts at the mouth of the Oregon and in Liberia, and making a proselyte of enlightened France, have disturbed all the ancient governments of Europe, and awakened the public mind to resistless action, from the shores of Portugal to the palaces of the Czars."

The American heart of the writer may have imparted fervor to his glowing conceptions; but truth has guided his pen. Even in the ordinary course of natural causes, and of human events, the sudden endowment of man with another Hemisphere, was well fitted to give a new and a most extraordinary impulse to the civilized world. But occurring as it did, at so peculiar a crisis, and standing in a most providential relation to the revival of letters, to the discovery of the magnet, the invention of printing, and especially to the Reformation of Luther, the extent of its influence cannot be grasped by a created intellect.

And then consider the moral power of those great principles of civil and religious freedom which we have called the American System. Contemplated as *a model*, though viewed from afar, our Federal Republic has been watched by the eager eyes of all the nations of Europe; and a stream of light has gone forth from it to distant lands. The name of our country is as music in the hearts of men. "*It is dreadful to tyrants only.*" But it is not merely "*the example*" of the American people "conquering their independence," that has been "seductive in the two worlds." The *success* which attended the illustrious experiment of self-government, and of unqualified freedom, has solved the great question, and brought in a new dispensation of liberty to man. It has taught the world that *the people*, under the influence of intelligence and religion, are the only qualified, as well as the only lawful sovereigns. It has proved that the Gospel of Christ can only *then* have free course and be glorified, *when* it is not trammelled and polluted by alliance to the State. It has illustrated the power and glory of voluntary union, in all the forms of human association that regard the

public good, or the Divine glory : and the press, as it were, putting on the wings of the morning, is bearing the news to the ends of the earth. In a word, our country has been made a field of public demonstration to the universe, of those great principles which constitute the rights, and secure the happiness of men and nations ; and as such, it is "*a spectacle to men and angels.*" And should the American Union this day be dissolved, and our glory depart for ever, we have, under God, lasted long enough to establish the great *theory* of freedom : the world will have been made the wiser and better for our example : we shall not have lived in vain : our principles cannot perish. From our ashes, the glorious spirit of our institutions would be relumed, and being poured upon other, and more favored generations, would live and reign as long as the sun endures.

But our influence ought not to be restricted to indirect effects, or what Schlegel with a taunt calls, "*natural infection.*" The intentional and direct instrumentality of a nation of philanthropists and of freemen, should constantly bear upon the extension of those great principles by which we have been so richly blessed. The "horizon of man" is our only boundary. The world is our field ; and its emancipation the illustrious and certain end. All good is social and diffusive, and especially that which relates to the public welfare of men and nations. The desire to impart these inestimable blessings to other nations, is a striking characteristic of the American spirit ; and, in correspondency with this spirit, is the ever-deepening preparation, in the condition and hearts of men, to receive them at our hands.

Our *accessible* and *peculiar* field of influence is even now immense. If we do but rightly colonize our own territory, and sustain in it as we ought, the institutions of religion and of civil freedom, we shall soon number one hundred millions of freemen in one vast Republic, stretching from ocean to ocean, larger than all Europe, and fitted to support half the present population of the globe.

And then the entire Continent, embracing both the Americas, must, at last, if we are faithful to our sublime and solemn trust, be evangelized, and liberated, and moulded by our influence.

Africa too, bleeding, injured Africa, must look chiefly to us for the Gospel of Christ, and all the blessings which it confers on man in social institutions, and for eternal life. There are now in our midst, millions of her sons brought to our shores by the most nefarious system of fraud that the world ever saw, who, in the mysterious providence of God, are becoming prepared to bear these blessings back to the mother country; and Africa, long trodden under foot by the nations, is now beginning to stretch forth her hands to God. But of all nations, *we* have most injured Africa; and of all nations we possess the most extraordinary resources to civilize, and evangelize that dark continent. Our facilities are exceeded only by our obligations. It has justly been remarked by the celebrated Douglass, that "the civilizers of Africa must be Africans; and America is the country where the civilization of Africa ought to commence. The methods of Providence, in preparing a way for the conversion of the uttermost parts of the earth, deserve to be well considered, and ought to be followed in our undertakings towards the same end. While Europeans are prevented from entering Africa, by the unhealthy climate, and their suspected color, thousands and millions of Africans have been permitted to be carried into countries, where Europeans cannot only reach them with safety, but where they are continually surrounded with the arts and knowledge of Europe. These Africans may be trained with great facility, to be the improvers of their country. Africa is in so low a state, that, at first, persons of very moderate acquirements will be most in contact with the minds of their countrymen; and a knowledge of the common arts of life, and the power of instructing others in reading, writing, and arithmetic, seems sufficient for the first pioneers, who, thus qualified, if they are sincere and zeal-

ous Christians, will find sufficient opportunity to spread their opinions."

Such, then, is the immeasurable field of influence which Providence has made peculiarly accessible to us. The right discharge of the great duty which we owe to these extended and important portions of the earth, may, by eminence, be called the *fulfilling of the American Dispensation*.

That we do not take too large a view of the field of American influence, or too partial a one of its power in the earth, I call for the corroborating testimony of our enemies. We are sustained by the fears of arbitrary princes, and the monitory voices of their wakeful sentinels, who, at the foot of the throne, and in the last watches of a long, dark night, forbode a morning of terror to the oppressors of man. Frederic Von Schlegel, one of the most distinguished subjects of Austria, and for some time intimately allied in state affairs, with the famous Metternich, thus strongly speaks in his Philosophy of History. "It is, strictly speaking, *an injustice to call this the French revolution*, or to regard it as such exclusively. It was a political disease, a popular epidemic of the age in general. In Holland and Belgium, it had broken out before ; in Poland, about the same time as in France ; for, although the Belgian, and more particularly the Polish revolution, had a character wholly different from that of France, it was, nevertheless, only a new phenomenon of the same kind, a mere additional example of the prevailing tone and spirit of the age. The *real nursery* of all these destructive principles, the *revolutionary school* for France, and the *rest* of Europe, *had been North America*. The *evil spread over many other lands*, either by *natural infection*, or *wilful communication*, though France did, indeed, continue to be the grand centre and focus of destruction. And even after the whole power of the revolution was concentrated in a single person, there was no material change in its progression. Externally, it remained, as to its form and relation to other powers, a reli-

gious war of one-and-twenty years ; such it really was, not only in its origin, but in its revolutionary and destructive tendency, and in its unceasing, fanatical enmity to every thing sacred. There was something positive, too, at the bottom of this modern heathenism, to wit, *political idolatry* ; whether the immediate temporary idol of the day were the *Republic*, and the Goddess of Freedom, or the *Great Nation*, or unmingled lust of conquest, matters little. It is the same demon of political destruction, the same spirit of anti-Christian policy which deceives the age, and aspires to rule the world. The abyss which threatens the world at present with destruction, is really nothing but this *political idolatry*, whatever form or name it may assume. Till this is wholly done away, till this abyss of ruin is completely closed, we cannot expect to see the house of the Lord, where peace and righteousness embrace each other, rise on the renovated earth." *Lecture 17*, vol. 2. p. 286.

And again : "Two things are essential to the true and complete renovation of our age ; one is, a fuller development of Christian government, (*de Christhechen staats*,) of the Christian state, (meaning the Papacy,) and of the Catholic principles of government, in opposition to the revolutionary spirit and anti-Christian principles which have hitherto prevailed ; the other is the Christian philosophy of religious or Catholic science."

He calls the peculiar character of the 18th century, with respect to politics, "*Protestantismus des Staats*," POLITICAL PROTESTANTISM, and prescribes as the only cure for it, the "*Katholische Staats grundsätzen*," i. e. CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT AND POLICY.—*Lecture 17*, vol. 2. pp. 309, et seq.

You see, then, that *Protestantism*, and *Liberty* are synonymous at the courts of despots, and in the vocabulary of the foes of human liberty ; and even our enemies themselves being judges, our country is the nursery of those principles and institutions which are to liberate the world.

III. The facts already presented, make it sufficiently apparent that our position as a nation exposes us to be the *subjects*, as well as the *agents*, of a very important influence. We are eminently qualified to *take*, as well as to *give*, impressions: and, in view of our relations to other lands, an impartial judgment will not hesitate to decide, that, without peculiar vigilance, and the Divine protection, we shall be exposed to immense peril in this interchange of influence.

At the era of the discovery and first settlement of America, powerful causes, already recited, combined to send to our continent, and especially to our country, the best population of the Old World. The enterprise and youthful ardor of Europe were directed to our shores. The perils of the deep, and the still greater and more enduring trials and terrors of the wilderness, affrighted the timid, and repelled the faint-hearted. Yet the field of immeasurable greatness opened by the discovery of the New World, attracted to it minds congenial with that of their illustrious leader; and the spirit of Columbus rested on the first Colonists of America. And then, while these facts sifted the infant States of the inert mass which might have infested and clogged them, a still higher and more important influence was gathering to the American shores the choicest population of Europe. It was the love of liberty, especially of religious liberty, acting in a line with the attraction of America, and the expulsive power of persecution and oppression. These causes collected giant-hearts into America, and prepared the way for those brilliant and benign effects which have followed.

But now, circumstances have not a little changed in several important respects. It is no longer the test of a hero to venture to America; and the Exodus is no longer limited to those choice, erect, indomitable spirits, whose motto was,

Ubi libertas—ibi patria.

We have not ceased to attract the true noblemen of the earth ; those who love liberty and truth, and man and God. But we have become a sort of depot to the corruptions and crimes of Europe. The sinking and besotted Empires of the Old World discharge upon us their mendicants, and paupers, and criminals. We receive the worst population of the worst States of Europe. They make their jail-deliveries on our shores, and seem to have selected America as the Botany Bay of the universe.

Early in our national history Mr. Jefferson, with almost a prophetic voice, warned us of our danger. “ *To these, (the principles of our government,) nothing can be more opposed than the maxims of absolute monarchies ; yet, from such we are to expect the greatest number of emigrants. They will bring with them the principles of the government they leave, imbibed in their early youth ; or if able to throw them off, it will be in exchange for an unbounded licentiousness, passing, as is usual, from one extreme to another. . . . In proportion to their numbers, they will share with us the legislation. They will infuse into it their spirit, warp and bias its direction, and render it a heterogeneous, incoherent, distracted mass.*”

The *causes*, in a word, which brought the first emigrants to America, have changed ; and with them, the *character* of those who come. Like poison infused into the animal economy, these unhappy elements rather *minge*, than *amalgamate* with the body of the nation. They are permitted by the liberal and confiding character of our institutions, to enter at once, into all that is peculiar to us. They crowd our cities ; they are dispersed through our villages and fields ; they expel us almost from our own ballot-boxes ; they mob us in our own high-ways ; they reduce the standard of public morals ; they crowd the catalogue of public crime ; they corrupt our people ; they endanger our national well-being. We were launched as a life-boat for the nations, from the wreck of human liberty

and hope in the Old World ; and now we are ready to be overwhelmed in a sea of troubles, by those whom we have attempted to save. It is impossible for our free institutions long to endure, unimpaired, the infusion of such destructive elements ; or even to a distant day to survive the shocks incident to so unnatural and ruinous an alliance. We *must* regulate the emigration to our country by additional laws, and stronger conservative sanctions, or we shall soon find in our bosom, when it will be too late for remedy, the shaft which our own hands have winged, and directed thither.

But, besides the evils incident to the influx of so unhappy a population, there is every ground to believe that there are deeply-laid designs upon the liberties of our country, at the seats of power in Papal Europe. We have presented to you already, the *design*, as well as the *fears* and *enmity* of the Austrian Statesman—the “*Political Protestantism*” of *America*, as he has told us, can only have its cure in the spirit of monarchy, transfused through the State and the Church. America, he avows to be the “real nursery” of liberty ; or, as he denominates it, “*the Revolutionary School for France and the rest of Europe.*” We are dreaded by foreign despots ; we are explored and agitated by foreign emissaries, who are sustained by foreign gold ; and foreign influence directly exerted, though unseen, may yet be numbered (without peculiar vigilance) among the leading causes not only of national danger, but of threatened dissolution to the American Union.

It was the Father of his Country who said, “Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, (I *conjure* you to believe me, fellow-citizens,) the jealousy of a free people ought to be *constantly* awake, since history and experience prove, that *foreign influence* is one of the most *baneful* *foes* of a republican government.”

The revolutions now occurring, or which have recently occurred, in the Papal States of Europe, have also given us

unwonted accessions of Jesuit-emigrants. He must be ignorant of the history of the world, or worse, who has any thing to *hope from* their influence, or to *trust to* their principles. They are, alternately, the instruments and the masters of Kings. They lurk through our country in all sorts of disguises, but with a single end in view, viz. "THE GOVERNMENT OF THE WORLD." It was a celebrated French politician, himself once an Abbe, (De Pratt,) who said of their system, "IN TIME, IT WILL GIVE EMBARRASSMENT TO THE UNITED STATES."

Besides these very serious facts, such is the extent of our commercial intercourse, and such the intimacy of our national relations with the States of Europe, that every event which at all affects the family of nations in the Old World, by a necessary and rapid sympathy must also affect America. But Europe is apparently on the verge of a crisis more eventful and decisive, than any which has transpired since the fall of Napoleon, or perhaps since the treaty of Westphalia. Immense convulsions, revolutions in the Church and in the State, of the most radical character ; bloody wars, which, being "*wars of opinion*," will admit of no termination but in the extinction of one party, and the supreme triumph of the other, seem to threaten all Europe ; and her destiny is suspended upon the verge of a smouldering volcano. The voice of the nations, conspiring with the spirit of prophecy, seems to say aloud, '*one wo is past, and behold, two woes come quickly.*' Now, every throe in the Old World will be felt with electrical effect in our country. We shall take the impression of every great event ; and the last earthquake, which shall rend and dissolve the ancient dynasties of Europe, will send its agitations into the bosom of our country. "The earth shall be shaken at the sound of their fall."

Add to all this, that even while I address you, we are threatened with a war with our ancient friend and ally, FRANCE, which, if permitted to issue, must not only be eminently disastrous to both nations, but must throw back

the march of truth and liberty for perhaps an age. It will put these nations in a *wrong position* to each other, and towards many of the existing Kingdoms of Europe, in regard to the great and glorious principles which we have been seeking from the origin of our Republic, to illustrate and diffuse abroad. These thoughts are well fitted to excite our very serious solicitude for our country, and require even young men who love her, "*to be sober-minded.*"

While then we should seek by every proper influence, to send abroad the spirit and blessings of liberty, and hail with enthusiasm the arrival on our shores of all men of every name, and from every clime, who love liberty, and are prepared to enjoy and *preserve* it—at the same time, as the depositaries and sentinels of that inestimable birth-right which God has conferred upon us, let us be ever erect and ever wakeful; prepared at all times to give up *all*, rather than this crown of our country, and glory of our age.

I speak, respected Youth, in the freedom and the fervor of an American citizen; born a freeman, by the grace of God, I am determined to die a freeman; and I am resolved, while I live and have utterance, to magnify and to defend that inestimable boon, which has descended to us from our martyred ancestry, as on a sea of blood.

IV. But it is time, in the last place, that we briefly advert to some of those anomalies and evils which threaten us from within.—For our object is impartially to glance at our leading characteristics. These present a blended portraiture of light and shade. We have our glory, and also our shame; our reasons for rejoicing and gratitude, and our calls to deep repentance, and thoughtful apprehension of the future.

Among these intestine evils, we name first,—*That our population outruns the means of knowledge.* The growth of our population by the twofold means of natural increase and foreign emigration, is without a parallel. We double

our number, and with it, the surface of country on which we dwell, every few years. Our agricultural habits, if properly directed, are eminently conducive to good order, sound morals, and liberty. But the spirit of internal emigration is incessant and most injurious. It scatters a sparse population over an interminable extent of territory, and when impelled, as at this moment, by the dangerous spirit of speculation in the soil of the nation, it becomes a source of the most detestable vices. The unstable, migratory spirit of the people, with their rapid growth, *runs away* from knowledge, even when carried by the hand of benevolence to their doors; and the Gospel of Christ must pitch its tabernacle in the wilderness, and follow our people from pasture to pasture, like wandering shepherds, in order to overtake and save the ever-growing, ever-moving mass. Even at this day, our more densely populated and established States are very imperfectly supplied with the means of elementary and general knowledge, and the public ministrations of the Gospel of Christ. And our new States and Territories, rising like enchantment to view, are in danger of retrogradation in the arts of life, in general intelligence, and especially in the saving knowledge and influence of Christianity. They are now living in only the dim twilight of truth; and their borders are fringed with a visible and augmenting barbarism. Patriots, Philanthropists, and Christians, must adapt their zeal, their labors, and sacrifices for the public good, to the greatness and urgency of these wants; or infinite mischief impends over our country from this enormous evil.

We mention, also, the unhappy and anomalous evil of *domestic slavery*. We call it anomalous, because it is directly at issue with the whole genius of our American System of liberty, with the radical constitution of good society, and the law and the Gospel of God.

I have been honored with a very undue degree of notoriety on this subject, by the fierce and fiery fanaticism of *some* of the public agitators of the country. My views,

therefore, are publicly known, and have been carried by the exciting character and diffusive discussion of the question, far beyond the humble claims of my position ; but not beyond my love for my country and the rights of man. Domestic slavery is an unwilling entail (by foreign influence) on these United States. And we have done more to extinguish it, than all the boasted benefactors of Africa abroad. We moved *first* against the slave trade, among the nations of the earth. In the short period of our national existence, we have removed domestic slavery from the *majority* of the original sovereign States ; and, in the present slave-holding States of our confederacy, the *spontaneous* benevolence of *slave-holders*, has *emancipated* more slaves now residing in their midst, than Britain has *bought* from all her colonies. There are now more than 200,000 free blacks in the slave States of America. And, until the war of agitation was begun, the progress of light and liberty was traveling southwardly and westwardly, on degrees of latitude and degrees of longitude. I say these things not to vindicate slavery. It is a stain on our escutcheon. It *must*, and it *will* cease, and *soon* ; if fury and folly will but cease to rend and agitate the public mind with revolutionary movements, and anti-social, anti-national organizations. Slavery is a poisoned vine, which has grown around our "tall and goodly" tree of liberty. But shall we fell the tree, that we may destroy the noxious vine ? God forbid. Slavery must cease. It is anti-American, and anti-Christian. They who love it, and cling to it, and plead right and "Scripture for the deed," are gathering a fearful crisis on their own soil, and for their own institutions. Such, we fondly believe, are found in a very small majority. The agitators of the land, whether foreign or domestic, are quite as far in evil on the other extreme ; and assuredly, in quite as small a fraction of our people. The peaceful and bloodless victory of truth, which is soon, we trust, to dawn upon us, will, with safety to the nation, and safety to the slave, remove

the shame and the evil of domestic bondage; and giving triumph to order, liberty to the captive, *true* prosperity to the land, and glory to the Lord,—will alike and for ever stigmatize and terminate the manifold excesses which have endangered so greatly the American Union.

Once more, we remark, in a few words, *on the spirit of insubordination which has lately appeared in our land.* Ours is the *best* government in the world for *good* men, and the *worst* for *bad*; and there are so many more bad men, than good in the world, that free governments have seldom long endured the unequal contest. It is a government which supposes men to be in the right position, and of the right spirit; a government of opinion, and of right opinion; of law, order, equity, equality. It seems to be a defect in the constitution of American society, or, perhaps, rather an *abuse* of our principles, that there is a strong propensity and ready transition of our population to an insubordinate spirit. Good laws are intended to secure, not to destroy or restrain *proper* liberty. It is natural, it is a duty, to be jealous of the least encroachment on our liberties. It is the necessary effect of our institutions to awaken such a spirit; and, like the love of life in man, it becomes one efficient means of *preserving* the inestimable boon. But in our country, the people are the sovereign, and originally make all their own laws. When, therefore, the people, with licentious violence, and criminal excess, tread the dominion of law in the dust; and especially when they do this in *masses*, so as alike to defy detection and punishment, they do then most wantonly plunder, not only their neighbors, but themselves, and become in its most desolating sense, *national suicides*. We are already beginning to be called the land of mobs. If the time should ever come when we shall deserve the title, our liberties will already have expired. The immortal Hooker, speaking in his own noble strain, of the dominion and dignity of law, has said: "Of law, there can be no less acknowledged, than that her seat is the

bosom of God, her voice, the harmony of the world. All things in heaven and earth do her homage; the very least, as feeling her care, and the greatest, as not exempted from her power; both angels and men, and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all, with uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy."

Shall my country be an exception to the harmony of the universe, in its homage to law? Shall we frighten back from the pursuit of freedom, the nations of the earth—which, roused by our example from the oppression of ages, are beginning to follow in the elevated career—by proving ourselves incapable of self-government, and unfit to be free? What a spectacle of infamy to the universe, if, after the illustrious achievement of freedom, and the re-establishment of those great principles by which alone it can be preserved and extended, we should fall a sacrifice to the sanguinary fury of an unbridled populace, and immolate ourselves with our own invincible arms! "It would raise up from their thrones all the kings of the nations! All they would speak and say, *Art thou become like unto us!* Hell from beneath would move to meet thee at thy coming!" A shout would go up from every despot—from the Autocrat of the North, to the petty tyrant of the South, who rules his trembling harem. Liberty would cease from the earth, and hope itself expire amidst so fearful a catastrophe!

Having thus endeavored to exhibit some of the distinguishing characteristics of our country, especially at the present crisis, *it remains for us briefly to inquire in view of them, what, as American Youth, you owe to your country and your age? What is your duty at the present crisis?*

The question of responsibility is one of peculiar nature and weight among the American people. In other countries, where little or none of the controlling power is lodged with the people, a very small portion of responsibility in regard to the government of the country, at-

taches to them. Their chief *sin* seems to be, a continued submission to lawless and uncontrolled despotism; their chief *care*, to shun the jealous and grasping hand of power; and their chief *joy*, that their rulers are not endued with an omnipresence which *none* can *shun*. But with *us*, the people are the depositaries of all power; from them all government proceeds; by them the rulers are elected and sustained. The responsibility of the government rests chiefly, therefore, upon them. It attaches the person of every citizen, and is distributed through the whole mass of the population. Every man is a sovereign. Their rulers are their creatures; their servants. The people are the seat of responsibility. We need not say that this immeasurably augments our *duties*, and if we be unfaithful to our trust, our *dangers* as a nation. But, besides the distributive responsibility which attaches to you, young gentlemen, in common with all your fellow-citizens, your age and position give peculiar importance and solemnity to your obligations. It is the business of young men, in time of war, to meet the *enemy* in the gate, and to vanquish him in the high places of the field. While the dew of their youth is on them, heaven and earth combine to claim their earliest love, and their freshest service. American Youth! Delightful, kindling epithet! How fraught with great duties and great rewards! How large and lovely the field of their enterprise! And when directed and sustained by God, how blessed their influence, and how sublime their destiny!

When the youth of the Roman Commonwealth were invested with the *toga virilis*, the lighter pursuits of early life at once gave place to the graver cares and more elevated duties of their country. From that moment they became the property of the Republic. American young men do not so early enter on the service of the State; and yet they are more impatient of restraint, and sooner aspire to the right and rank of self-control. With us, the day for assuming the care of our country, should begin from the moment that our

sons can lisp her venerated name ; and patriotism should be enshrined in the same sanctuary of the soul, with the love of God.

The first and most obvious duty of every American young man, is to acquaint himself with the history, the institutions, the position, and the relations, the influence, the true destiny, and danger of his country, especially at the present crisis. Without this, he can never know his duty, still less can he do it. One of the most singular and reprehensible oversights, in the education of our sons, is, that we teach them to understand the history and institutions of all lands and ages, sooner and better than their own. Now, the fact is, that in many material points, *the same names mean things wholly different* in different ages of the world, and even in coeval nations. What do the *rights of man* mean, at Vienna, or St. Petersburg? What does *sovereign* mean in America? What does *good government* mean at Madrid? What does freedom, or the liberty of the press, or Christianity mean at *Rome*, at this day? Our freedom is our peculiarity, as it is our glory ; our institutions make our country ; for them it is we love our country. The history of these, and of that great event, or rather galaxy of events, by which, under God, they were established, present, in every page, "*facts combining all the sobriety of truth, with more than the grandeur of fiction!*" With Irving to introduce you, at the side of Columbus, to this great second inheritance of man, with Mather, and Ramsay, and Marshall, and Hamilton, and Madison, and Bancroft, to guide you through these scenes of thrilling interest, and of great events, you need not be at a loss to learn how much it cost, in the toils, and the blood of your fathers, to purchase the blessings which you now enjoy. From this extraordinary history, you may gather, with growing gratitude, what you owe to your country, and your God.

It is the duty of American Youth to prepare themselves, at all points, for the service of their country.

It is your *birth-right*, that you may rise to any elevation in her service, for which you are truly qualified. The only nobility we own, is that of great endowments, and of great virtues. This heraldry we inherit from the God of nations. It is the only pedigree of a free people. You belong to your country. She has been made the depository of inestimable blessings, for her own enjoyment, and for the whole family of man. She needs your service to preserve and to extend them abroad. It is an illustrious trust. You must be thoroughly prepared to assume it; you must train your understanding, and store it with knowledge; you must discipline your affections; form your habits; establish your principles; and fix your great purpose of life. You cannot, on the one hand, divest yourself of the weight of responsibility; you might as well try to divest yourself of your immortality: nor yet can you, on the other, meet your duty to your country without a deep and thorough training of your whole nature. And, allow us to add, that he cannot be in a right position to his country, who is in a wrong position to his God. You will need the renovation and the support of religion in a venal world, and an excited age, to teach you in the knowledge, and sustain you in the discharge of those great and critical duties which will soon become a part of your being. We know, full well, that young men are often ashamed of Jesus. But let it be indelibly inscribed on your memory, that he will not purely serve his country, who is ashamed of his God. He cannot be a safe counsellor who never prays; and that man *always has his price*, who glories in his sin. It was beautifully remarked of Washington, "*that all his moral qualities were great talents.*" And the illustrious Gustavus Adolphus prayed at the head of his victorious army on the day of battle. Goodness is greatness. To *all* it is the only safe guard; but it is a crown of glory to a young man; "his shield and his exceeding great reward;" it is the foundation of virtue, patriotism, and extensive usefulness; it adds a new lustre to

every endowment ; and it makes him incorruptible. By it ambition is resolved into the public good. The tempter is rebuked from the presence of its possessor ; and the corrupt and selfish passions expire at his feet.

————— His grave rebuke,
Severe in youthful beauty, addeth grace
Invincible. Abashed the tempter stands,
And feels how awful goodness is, and sees
Virtue in her form how lovely !

We esteem it the peculiar honor of the Institution with which you are connected, that *the Bible*, was laid at its foundation ; that its morality was avowed as the standard of its laws ; its influence, the supremacy of good for time and eternity ; its pages, a text-book for its classes ; and the Saviour whom it reveals, the hope of its teachers, and sons.

In hoc signo vinces.

V. *Cherish an elevated, and disinterested public spirit.*

Young men have more of generous purpose than old men. Before the passions have subsided, the heart may be kindled by great occasions to noble sentiments and sublime actions. But you need more than the impulse of youthful ardor, which is irregular in its operation, and decreases with experience. Ours is a selfish world. Public spirit and elevated virtues, are not native, nor of easy acquisition. They are great and rare qualities. Yet they are within your reach. It is a peculiar mercy also, that these qualities, like the greater luminaries of the heavens, though rare, shed their lustre abroad. In most of those great enterprises, which have astonished and blessed the world, a few select spirits, only, have been employed. Sometimes heaven has committed the greatest achievements to a single mind, as the names of Moses, Nehemiah, Paul, Luther, Columbus, Howard, sufficiently declare. These pioneers of the race, have led the van of human enterprise, and have often stood

alone, deserted by man, but sustained by God, till the conquest was achieved. Then little souls almost adored, whom before they feared to follow, and affected to despise.

We would not be understood to tempt your ambition, or excite in your bosoms the low passion of the love of glory ; but we would point you to great actions, that you may emulate the sublime disinterestedness, and public good of their authors. Nor need you be discouraged by the thought, that these great occasions are of rare occurrence, and of difficult application. In an age and a land like this, where you stand daily at the seat of great causes, which are working great effects, for time, for the whole world, and for eternity, your every day concerns connect themselves with great elements, and great results. In such a world, nothing is properly little but *selfishness*. Even sin works a great damnation. So the most retired benevolence may bear fruits that shall abide for ever.

But you have come upon the stage of life at a most eventful day in the history of the world. More great events have been developed in the last sixty years, than for ages before ; and it is probable that the next sixty years will fix the principles, and mature the events on which, under God, the consummation of all things below is suspended. You may witness the concluding revolutions of the nations ; the latest fulfilment of the prophecies ; the universal spread of liberty ; the fall of sin, and the conversion of the world. Great events have succeeded each other very rapidly of late years ; and great effects have sprung from apparently trivial causes. An obscure layman suggested the idea of Sunday Schools ; and now what is the result, already ? Robert Raikes, the gentle, benevolent Quaker, has filled Christendom with the praises of his name, and the power of his simple, but sublime principle. And, to carry on the *chain* of illustrations, a poor Sunday School boy, in the person of Morrison, gave the Bible to the three hundred millions of China. The era is fruitful of great events ; and it calls for

a corresponding public spirit to exhibit, apply, and extend them. The influence of a disinterested and noble example, the habitual display of a truly public spirit, is eminently conducive to the public good. While such an example is within the attainment of all, there will ever and anon break forth from the life of men, actions, which it is worth an age of toil to perform ; which give peculiar glory to God, and confer lasting benefits on the world. Of these, the great Robert Hall speaks in that discourse in which he pours such withering contempt upon the infidelity of the age. He charges it with barrenness in great virtues. He illustrates what such virtues are ; and what are their effects :

“By great and sublime virtues, are meant those which are called into action on great and trying occasions, which demand the sacrifice of the dearest interests and prospects of human life, and sometimes of life itself ; the virtues, in a word, which, by their rarity and splendor, draw admiration, and have rendered illustrious the character of patriots, martyrs, and confessors. They are important, both from their immediate advantage, and their remoter influence. They often save, and always illustrate, the age and nation in which they appear. They raise the standard of morals ; they arrest the progress of degeneracy ; they diffuse a lustre over the path of life : monuments of the greatness of the human soul, they present to the world the august image of virtue in her sublimest form, from which streams of light and glory issue to remote time and ages.”

But a true public spirit, though denied the occasion of such illustrious actions, will pour through life a pure and lucid stream of good, which, in its more gentle and steady flow, compensates for the absence of sublime and dazzling events.

We trust that it is an error in our judgment, which may spring from an excess of admiration of the era of the American Revolution ;—but we have feared that we were losing the race of men eminent for patriotism, and the sublime vir-

tues of that wonderful day. Are we not passing into the dispensation of great institutions, and little men? Let the thought arouse your public spirit. Let the fear, and the shame of such a result, for ever prevent its occurrence. The bane of young men is the *love of pleasure*. The *love of money*, which is so deep and diffusive an evil in America, is more properly a senile vice. But the former belongs to Youth, and withers the heart in which it settles. It expels all things great, as well as all things good. It is a vulgar, base, and selfish passion. It leaves a young man too little reason to be thoughtful—too little feeling to be generous. It is a sordid, ignoble passion. He to whom it is an act of self-denial to abandon the pursuits of pleasure, may be considered as lost already to his country, and sealed to final ruin. He cannot conceive of a great action, who stoops so low. He will never “vanquish a city, who cannot rule his spirit.” He who cannot relinquish the cup of pleasure, for his character, or his conscience, has nothing left for his country, but the beacon of a wicked life, and the deposit, for her tomb, of his dishonored dust.

Many important suggestions crowd upon our thoughts, while we endeavor to call up to view your duty to your country at the present crisis. But these will naturally present themselves in connection with what has been said already under the first general topic; many of them are often and ably discussed; and it is also quite time to bring this address to a close.

We suggest, then, in the last place, the *transcendent and all-comprehensive duty of seeking, by all proper means, to enthrone in your country the supreme influence of the Bible*. We are well aware that the very mention of such an influence is hateful to some minds, whose rancor is only equalled by their errors, as to the true source of personal and national blessings. We are aware that religion has been tortured, in the Old World, first into the instrument, and then into the mistress of the State; that the worst men

with whom the earth was ever cursed, have been the professed *priesthood* of the church in some ages ; and that even good men have often sadly marred the Church and the State, by an evil and unnatural alliance. We are not merely content, but rejoiced, that a watchful and jealous eye, overlooking every sect, and every altar, in the land, guards the sacred deposit of our freedom. Christians are but men—their Ministers are but men—all need to be steadily observed by the public eye ; and they who murmur at such tutelary vigilance, are the men who need it most. But remember ; it was not the *Bible*, that corrupted and ruled the State ; nor the *reading* of the Bible by the people, which *enslaved* the people. No. The Priesthood first *forsook* the Bible, and then *forbid* it to the people ; and then the people were *corrupted*, and then they were *enslaved*. *The word of God in the hands of the people has always restrained the Priesthood, and liberated the people. It is impossible to enslave the people with the law of light and liberty in their hands.* In our land, from the very great distribution of religious influence, it is out of the question to consolidate religious control, even supposing the different denominations to desire it. For they would fall out by the way, in fixing on the terms of union—they would divide at the threshold, in selecting the candidate for supremacy. But one event can produce such a result, and that is, that a single denomination should control the majority of the people, and should successfully forbid to that majority the use of the Bible.

Now the American people can never be free, beyond the power and the period of self-government : and there is no law but God's, which can reach the heart, and regulate the life of man. "*It makes a man a law unto himself.*" It makes him the subject of the King of kings, and as to all lesser rulers and beings, *free, in fact, by character, and of right.* No nation of the earth has ever been *free without* the Bible, or *long enslaved with it.* He is the enemy of

his country, who would restrain this great emancipator of man from the hands and the hearts of the people. We appeal to the history of the world, especially (in continued contrast) to the history of our age. Let any man compare Scotland with Ireland; Holland with Spain; England with Italy; North America with South America. The history of the Bible is the history, not only of light and of Redemption, but of civil and religious liberty. Hence, the Emperor of the Russias put down the Bible Society; and the Pope of Rome repeatedly denounced it, and with it, the liberty of the press, and the freedom of Political Associations. The Bible is, under God, to be the liberator of man. Spread it, then. It alone can purify and pacificate the world. When its influence shall have been felt in every heart of man, there will not be left on earth a throne for a tyrant; the last subject will have been torn from his dominion; and he will remain himself the only slave. It will go forth like the wind which God sent forth after the deluge, over the wide waste of waters, to calm the ocean of human passions, and restore beauty and order to the void and formless earth.

Thus have we endeavored to portray to your kind attention, Young Gentlemen of the EUCLEIAN and PHILOMATHLEAN SOCIETIES, the responsible trust committed to American Youth, by the God of nations. May you never be permitted to disesteem it, to slight it, to betray it! We would fondly hope that our free Government is no longer an *experiment*, but, that the principle has been established, "the great problem solved," that man has not only the *right*, but the *power* to be *free*.

It is related of Columbus, that, on his way to the Old World with the *news* of his *discovery*, his *little bark* was overtaken by so fearful and prolonged a tempest, that he gave up all hope of reaching the main-land. In that awful moment, big with manifold death, resolving to *preserve the great event from being buried with him in the sea*,

he wrote on parchment the account of his discovery, which he directed to civilized man ; and, enclosing it in a cask, placed it on the poop of his vessel, so that though he should sink, the discovery might survive. So may it be with you. To you is committed that treasure which gave its chief value to the discovery of Columbus. So live, so die, that freedom may survive.

ERRATUM.—Page 30, line 6 from the bottom, for "small majority," read
"small minority."

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